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Towards a tailored approach in Percutaneous Coronary Interventions

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Towards a tailored approach in Percutaneous Coronary Interventions: The role of new diagnostic and treatment modalities

Jasper S. Wijpkema

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‘Want God had de wereld zo lief dat hij zijn enige Zoon heeft gegeven, opdat iedereen die in hem gelooft niet verloren gaat, maar eeuwig leven heeft.’

Johannes 3:16, NBV

Foreword

In recent decades, the delivery of healthcare has changed dramatically. The main interest in the development of new diagnostic and therapeutic modalities has shifted to a more patient-oriented approach on how to implement newly acquired insights into clinical practice within the inevitable budgetary constraints. This is especially true for the rapidly changing field of percutaneous coronary intervention, in which cardiovascular innovations and economic constraints have been shown to be closely interrelated. Consequently, in the decision process, the interventional cardiologist has to consider whether potential patient benefits outweigh managerial interests such as the involved workforce, resources and logistics. While finding appropriate solutions to specific disease problems, a variable range of questions may arise. In order to answer these questions in an effective and efficient way, an immediate clinical response guided by evidence based medicine is indispensable.

Interestingly, this issue is further extended as new education programs at Dutch universities are being introduced. Students are encouraged to engage in a MD-PhD-trajectory that enables them to write a thesis within 2 years following their MD graduation. This is not only an enormous career opportunity for students, but also facilitates research supervisors to identify and stimulate potential new researchers in an early stage phase. Of course, the road towards completion of a thesis harbours challenges, and problems such as flawed experiments and negative results may put pressure on the already limited time available. However, with intensive support available for MD-PhD students these issues can be addressed and solved in time and may even add to the learning process.

And so, while writing this thesis, new insights have been gained and the scope of interest has broadened. Surprised, sometimes discouraged, but ultimately always challenged by these unexpected changes, I feel maturation might be the most important personal landmark reached. Therefore, I hope that in addition to the clinical implications which it contains, this thesis will also serve as an encouragement to future (MD-)PhD-candidates to recognise, put in perspective and finally conquer the challenges they are faced with.

Jasper S. Wijpkema

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